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Was Mobile Bay
the Bay of Spiritu Santo?

BY

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IV. WAS MOBILE BAY THE BAY OF SPIRITU SANTO?

BY PETER JOSEPH HAMILTON,¹ Mobile.

On almost all of the earliest maps, Spanish and French, of the Gulf of Mexico, is found a broad indentation of the northern shore near its centre. On many it is marked Baia or Rio del Spiritu Santo, or some variation or translation of that name. Often there are other marks on the Gulf for rivers or bays, but even if no others are shown, this one is. Sometimes a river, or double river, is given as emptying into the bay, sometimes the reproductions accessible cut off the stream, but from almost the first the bay is landlocked within the shore line, has the characteristics of a double or split head at the north end, and its mouth is narrowed at the Gulf by a projecting headland from the east. Which of our present inlets represents this old landmark, the most prominent of the Gulf ports?

After De Soto's discovery of the Mississippi river in 1541, and particularly after LaSalle descended it in 1682, that great stream became the principal object of interest to explorers. Its importance has overshadowed all other rivers and writers have generally assumed that this River of the Holy Spirit was identical with the Mississippi. This view, however, seems to overlook the fact that there was a bay as well as a river to be accounted for. In writing *Colonial Mobile* I corresponded with that eminent cartographer, Justin Winsor of Harvard, and he called attention to a suggestive monograph on the subject by Walter B. Scaife, in the Johns Hopkins *Studies*.

Mr. Scaife claims that the waters in question represent Mobile Bay and river. Thomassy, the famous French geologist, of New Orleans, who had access at Paris or elsewhere to some maps not now known, had already several times in his *Geologie Pratique de la Louisiane*² indicated his conviction that this bay was that of Mobile, and Francis Parkman³ not only represents LaSalle as believing it but believed it himself. *The Narrative and Critical His-*

¹ For sketch of Mr. Hamilton, see *Trans. Ala. Hist. Society*, 1897-98, vol. ii, p. 39-40.—EDITOR.

² Page 20, e. g.

³ *Discovery of the Great West*, p. 410.

tory is not altogether consistent, but at least in the *Mississippi Basin*,⁴ almost his last book, Justin Winsor reconsiders the general opinion of the *Narrative and Critical History*, and intimates that the bay in question was used almost interchangeably for Mississippi Sound and Mobile Bay. On the other hand the Louisiana Historical Society restate the claims of the Mississippi.

Evidently, therefore, the question is one of importance and interest, with enough of uncertainty thrown in to give it that piquancy which Lessing declares essential to search after truth. At the same time it is simply a matter of evidence and can be discussed and settled without partisanship.

Columbus himself always supposed that he had reached the Asiatic islands, and he never touched our North American continent, although he explored the shores of Brazil. Hayti and then Cuba were at first the great objects of Spanish interest, but as their explorations progressed they found the mainland of North America, and it gradually develops on the rare old maps which time has spared. In 1513 Ponce de Leon, in a vain search for the fountain of youth, led the way from Cuba to the Spanish colonization of the Florida he named, and, six years later, Cortez from the same island conquered the rich Aztec kingdom, Mexico. This fired others to seek on the shores of our Gulf dominions which would enrich the discoverers and at the same time spread further the sway of His Catholic Majesty. The Mexican Gulf and its islands became Spanish, well explored by their navigators, but unfortunately little is even yet known of their voyages despite the collections of Munoz, Navarrete, Ternaux and others. Their reports and papers may some day be unearthed from continental convents and libraries to enrich history, but for the present we have only meagre outlines and few Spanish maps. From them we learn at least, however, that Mexico (including also our Texas and the Northwest) was called New Spain, and that all east to the Atlantic was also claimed for Spain under the name of Florida.

Let us first study the *locus in quo* and see what the north coast of the Gulf affords in the way of prominent rivers and harbors.

⁴ Winsor's *Mississippi Basin*, p. 76. Cf. Winsor's *Narrative and Critical History of America*, vol. ii, considering the bay as the Mississippi, and *Ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 237, where it is suggested, with an interrogation point, that Baye du St. Esprit of Beaujeu was Mobile.

Beginning from the east we have open to the Gulf Apalache Bay, then the large Apalachicola river, with sickle-shaped Cape St. Blas to its west enclosing St. Joseph's Bay, next Pensacola Bay with a double head, Perdido Bay and river, then Mobile Bay, the largest of them all, Pascagoula river and bay, Biloxi Bay, Lake Borgne, the Mississippi delta, and Sabine river and Pass. Galveston Bay with Trinity river mark where the Gulf coast turns southwest, and from Matagorda it turns south, so continuing past the Rio Grande. It is hardly possible to identify the Spanish names for all, but may we not ascertain which one of these was the Spiritu Santo? It was on the north coast, and of those eleven at least Apalache, Perdido, and Sabine can be eliminated at once. And this must be remembered: if it is a question of bay *and* river, the Apalachicola (or Chattahoochee), St. Joseph's, and Biloxi are out of the race, and the only way even the Mississippi can be considered would be by treating Lake Borgne as one of its outlets.

EARLIEST MAPS.

There are a large number of early maps of various nations in books and in collections. The tests of their value are age and accuracy, and, as they are seldom made by the explorers themselves, neither test can always be made out. Mr. Winsor wrote me once that often old maps confused him and made him more uncertain, and Humboldt's remark is certainly correct that in early explorations distances will be incorrect, but directions approximately true. Almost necessarily we have to consider all the main maps that relate to our subject, making special remarks upon such as seem to be of importance.

The earliest known is one on ox-hide, by Cosa, a companion of Columbus. It gives Cuba and many names on South America, but the Gulf of Mexico, while shown, is conjectural. Peninsular Florida is hardly indicated, for there is not a name on the coast, and a vignette of St. Christopher covers all the other parts that are of interest to us. This is good negative evidence. We had not as yet been discovered.

The Cantino map of 1502 is more in detail, but its left hand margin cuts off all but the point of Florida. The Ruysch map of 1508 shows the definite conception that our Gulf was one on the coast

of China, the Plisicus Sinus. Tebet is on the west coast of the Gulf and the land of Magog includes what is now Alabama.⁵

The next is more important. It is called Tabula Terre Nove, or the Admiral's map, from probable connection with Columbus, and Winsor tells of the romantic origin of its engraving at St. Dié in east France. The map may go back to 1507, but the print dates from 1513.⁶ Jan Stobnicza's map of 1512 in the Howard Memorial Library collection is not very different.

The Atlantic coast of North America on the Admiral's chart shows many names, and South America below Isabella (Cuba), Spagnola and the other islands is even better developed. With our Gulf it is different. Even the peninsula of Florida is a flat, sprawling, club-footed kind of a thing, with two names like "Comello" and "Clurtar," that belong almost anywhere. The mainland has a wavy shore line with what seems to be "B. dolivo" and "C. arltar," and then comes the first river, emptying into a bay, and having on its east side the name "rio de como" and on its west the name "rio de la palmas." Close to the river on the west is "lago dellodro," a large open bay. There the names cease, and the coast turns south, until due west from Cuba is a wide stream with three mouths, its delta projecting far out into the Gulf, and between it and Florida are a number of islands. As the large river is unnamed, it may be given from report only, but it must have been from detailed report, and the natural inference, generally drawn, is that it is the Mississippi. If so, the other river and the open bay are not connected with the Mississippi and one or the other can well be Mobile, the largest deep bay and the second river on the north Gulf coast. But where the information came from we do not certainly know. It was not until 1519 that we have any account of exploration.⁷

SPIRITU SANTO—FIRST TYPE.

This was when a Spanish governor of Jamaica named Garay sent out an expedition to find a passage west of Florida,—then supposed to be an island. The commander, Pineda, coasted along the northern shore of the Gulf from east to west, and explored

⁵ These three are in Scaife's *America*, etc.

⁶ *Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 34. The map is given in *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 112.

⁷ Fiske's *America*, p. 178.

until he came to Mexico. He could not well have missed Mobile Bay, and next year Garay sent home a map⁸ embracing his discoveries, which seems to show it plainly. Mr. Scaife thinks that Pineda meant the Panuco by the river which he speaks of as draining the populous province of Amichel, and finds the first mention of the Spiritu Santo to be by Peter Martyr, who distinguishes it from the Panuco and the River of Palms. But if not in Garay's report it is at least on his map of 1520, on which Amichel embraces all the north Gulf coast,⁹ and from that time forth on many others. Pineda or Garay, therefore, would seem to have given the name.

This chart establishes the first of the four types of the Spiritu Santo bay which appear on the early maps and this deep indentation of the coast with its eastern offset make up henceforth the most prominent landmark on the northern, as R. de Panuco (Tampico) does of the western Gulf coast. This seems to show it as well known and often visited. Cortez suspected that Garay was trying to encroach on some of his territory and he had a plat made showing the west coast of the Gulf in considerable detail. It also gives the Rio del Spiritu Sancto as the first name west of Florida, —a two pronged river emptying into the largest bay on the Gulf, the bay also with two arms to the east and a small island near the mouth. Five other streams empty to the west of our bay before the Gulf turns south, one near a "P. Arrecifos" (probably for "arreciffes," reefs), being traced to the source, and the two furthest being named "R. de Arboledas" and "R. la palma." Then after what seems to be "Tamacho Pincia," (provincia,) comes the two branched "Rio panuco laoton" in the centre of the west coast, near which is marked "Provincia Amichel," with the word "Archidona" near islands. Here the coast turns southeast and shows in succession the names Sant Pedro, Almeria, and a number of bays and rivers which do not concern our present subject. Several other maps of this time show Spiritu Santo alone or with Panuco, and while both are named as rivers they are almost always pictured as bays.¹⁰

⁸ *Narrative and Critical History*, vol. ii, p. 218.

⁹ *Ibid*, vol. ii, p. 237.

¹⁰ Fiske's *America*, pp. 218-223; *Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, 39, &c. Cortez's map is given in *Narrative and Critical History*, vol. ii, p. 404. Lok 1582 shows a river, Franciscus Monachus names it, as does Ortelius 1570, and Hakluyt-Martyr 1587.—*Cartier to Frontenac*, pp. 20, 22, 65, 72.

An important map is a Spanish one said to be of 1527, found at Weimar. Ribero's, two years later, was based on it and may be considered with it. They do not give a west line to *Mundus Novus*, but the Atlantic and Gulf coast is remarkably accurate and full of names. The former indicates in the interior north of the Gulf that it was land which "Panfilo de Narbaes" attempted to settle, and in this must therefore be later than 1528, while the latter calls it "Tierra de Garay." The sweep of the north coast is correct on the 1527 map, distinctly showing the wide expanse we call Apalache Bay near the peninsula, the projection at the other extremity which we call the Mississippi delta pierced by a river, and almost midway in the swell between is a two-headed bay with narrow mouth labelled "Mar pequena" (little sea, i. e., salt water) and "R. del Spiritu Sancto." The map of 1529 shows the mouths of two other rivers emptying into this bay further east, and by the first is the word "ostial," changed on later charts into "ostras." Next east of the bay the coast shows "motas (mounds) de S. Salvador," "ancones" (bays), "medauos" (sandbanks), and several times the word "reciffes" or "arreciffes" (reefs), and one village (aldea) is also given. Among the proper names occur the R. de Flores and Canaveral to the east and Escordido, Madalena, Las Palmas and Montanas to the southwest of Spiritu Santo. There are perhaps a dozen names between the Spiritu Santo and the peninsula, and as many between it and what seems to be Panuco, on both maps. On that of 1529, by R. Escordido is also the name Malabrigo, which will be noticed later. These maps of 1527 and 1529 fix the names and details for all after them. They are much fuller than that of Maiollo, also of 1527,¹¹ which has east of the R. de Spiritu Santo only a bay marked Abadia de Garay.

The next explorer after Pineda was the unfortunate Narvaez, in 1528. He as "governor of Florida, Rio de Palmas, and Spiritu Santo,"¹² undertook an expedition to Rio de Palmas, but was glad to put to sea for Mexico in rude boats at St. Marks or Apalache Bay. He coasted westwardly, according to Biedma touched in Chuse Bay for water, and some of his men may have died, as tradition asserts, on Dauphine Island. He was himself

¹¹ In Winsor's *Cartier to Frontenac*, 19.

¹² *Narrative and Critical History*, vol. ii, p. 242.

lost from his boat's being driven out to sea by the current of a large river, it may be the Mississippi, but some of his men under Cabeza de Vaca, explored westwardly towards the Rocky Mountains. He or they must have examined the whole north coast of the Gulf, but no account is known of sufficient detail to add to our knowledge.

DeSoto's admiral, Maldonado, is the next known after Narvaez, but his discoveries, except that of the port of Ochus, likewise are lost. Those of DeSoto himself in the interior are hardly better known. His chroniclers mention many names, but it is difficult to identify them. The Gentleman of Elvas is the oldest record and generally regarded as the most reliable. He gives the places visited by DeSoto in the following order: (1) Canasagua, subject to Coça, on a river not named; (2) Chiaha; (3) Coste; (4) Tali; (5) Coça; (6) Tallimuchase; (7) Ytaua in the province of Coca, on a river not named; (8) Ullibahali, on a small river; (9) Toasi; (10) Tallise, near a "main river"; (11) Casiste, a great town; (12) Piache, on a "great river"; (13) Mavilla, in the province of Tascaluza; (14) Taliepatava, in the province of Pafallaya; (15) Cabusto, near a "great river;" (16) Chicaça, after crossing a river; (17) the province of Saquechuma; (18) Alimamu; (19) town of Quiz Quiz, on the "Rio Grande;" and then after crossing that stream, which is the Mississippi, (20) Aquixo; (21) towns of the province of Casqui; (22) Pacaha; and after 100 leagues, (23) Quigaute, the greatest town in Florida; and then, (24) Coligoa. The others do not concern us.¹³ Chiaha is near Rome, Ga., Talisee and Toasi near Montgomery, Coça is the sacred Indian City upon the Coosa, Mavilla in Clarke county; but his province of Tascaluza, of which Mavilla was a large town, does not appear on early maps, unless it is as "Tagil." Biedma supposed that the river near Mavilla emptied about 40 leagues below into the Bay of Chuse,¹⁴ but he is the only one to make that supposition. It was in fact the Alabama, for no other stream in that section would require two days for the construction of rafts, and Biedma places Chiaha on an island in the Spiritu Santo River, whose source he also mentions. The Gentleman of Elvas says Maldonado waited at Ochuse, six days journey, which DeSoto had

¹³ French's *Historical Collections of Louisiana*, vol. ii.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

appointed as a rendezvous, although Biedma says that was to be the Spiritu Santo River.¹⁵ The only time the name Holy Spirit is used of what can only be the Mississippi is where Biedma speaks of Quiz Quiz as on that river. Elsewhere he and the other chroniclers call it the Rio Grande.¹⁶ So that intentionally or otherwise, Biedma, who is less exact than the Gentleman of Elvas, does once call the Mississippi the Rio del Spiritu Santo, but Biedma also once (or perhaps twice) calls the Alabama or Coosa by the same name. No mention seems to be made of a map as used by DeSoto in the interior, although his secretary, Ranjel, says the Spiritu Santo emptied into a bay according to a chart, and after the survivors put to sea Juan D'Anasco drew what he said was a copy of a sea chart which he had seen. It may have been that of Cortez, as he mentions the river of Palms; but as he does not name where he thought he was at the time it does not throw any light on our present inquiry.

Cabot's map of 1544 seems to be modeled on that of Ribero. On it appear away to the east the Bay of Miruelo, and the word "culata" is placed by the eastern extension of Spiritu Santo bay. Scaife, who is not a Spanish scholar, translated this as "muddy" but it seems to mean "gunstock," which would very appropriately refer to the arm of Mobile Bay we now call Bon Secours. The accuracy of the exploration is shown by its representing the bay as long, widening to the south, not flat like Pensacola Bay. It fits no other harbor than Mobile. The name is repeated on many later charts, sometimes spelled "Qulata." The west cape of the main bay now becomes C. de Cruz. The river itself appears for the first time, but this may not point to DeSoto, for none of the others he crossed are shown, and some river had of course been implied all the time. Cabot's map is valuable from the fact that it is perhaps the first to show the west coast of Mexico and to indicate the peninsula of California. This is of importance to us as showing that the southern part of North America was already well explored.¹⁷ Homem in 1558 is quite similar, and Ramusio, 1556, also, but has only the bay.¹⁸

After DeSoto the next visitor, however, was Bazares, sent by

¹⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 99, 101, 160.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 105, 167.

¹⁷ *Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iii, p. 22.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, vol. ii, p. 228, &c.

Velasco, governor of Mexico, in 1558, to find a suitable place for a colony. He explored from Mexico north, going eastwardly beyond Pensacola. Tristan de Luna actually settled on our coast in consequence. This expedition is interesting and raises questions as to Filipina Bay and Ychuse. In Davilla Padilla's account of the expedition of the Spaniards in 1560 with the Coça Indians, he says they drove the revolted Napoches out of the towns and these sought refuge at "Oquechiton" or the big water, which was their name for the Spiritu Santo.¹⁹ Shea makes the Napoches to be Natchez and the river the Mississippi; but this could not be, for the river is mentioned as having fords, which the Napoches used. It was therefore some tributary of the Mobile, perhaps, in the Coosa region.

Mercator in 1569 gives a number of streams, R. del espirito santo and Baia de Culata retaining their place in the centre. An indicated eastern affluent of the bay is named Guadalquivir. On the west side of the first river is "Cossa," and upon the next river east (R. de flores) is "Tagil," as provinces, not towns. One would expect by this time some trace of DeSoto's or Tristan's expeditions, but there is none. The Mississippi is not shown by any marks that identify it more than before DeSoto's time. In fact, as Mr. Winsor observes, it was not yet thought of as important, for Mercator runs the Apalachian chain clear across his map, thus making all his Gulf rivers comparatively short.²⁰ The next river west is "rio de gigantes," and then "rio de piscadores," with the word "Malabrigo" near its mouth, just as it occurred on the 1529 map by side of the "rio escondido." This tends to identify the rivers Piscadores and Escondido, which do not appear on the same map. That of Ortelius in 1570 is quite similar, showing "Coosa" between R. de S. Spirito and R. de Flores next east, with "Tagil" at sources of the latter, while the "rio de piscadores" becomes "Malabrigo." This probably points to "Malbanchia," the native name for the Mississippi in French times.

SECOND TYPE.

Thos. Hood in 1592 reverts to a chart form, with only seacoast, and makes R. del Spiritu Santo empty into the northwest corner

¹⁹ *Historia* Cap. LXVI, p. 215; *Essayo Cron.* of Cardenas, p. 1560.

²⁰ *Mississippi Basin*, p. 13.

of a large but flattened bay, having "Ostras" and "Marpeqna" between that and another river at the northeast corner. There are no interior names, except "Florida" to the east. If this is meant for Mobile, the river next east of it and the name "Matas de Salvador" must relate to our Perdido, and R. de las Angeles and R. de Governador represent Pensacola. The latter name, it will be remembered, was often used by the Spaniards for one of the rivers there. Wolfe's Linschoten of 1598 shows a similar Filipina and a separate inlet further east called "Nra. Seno de Ochu," but with rivers differently named.²¹ Hood establishes a second type, therefore, with the bay flattened and showing a number of names.

THIRD TYPE.

In 1597 is an interesting map of Wytfliet²² showing more of the interior than a similar less detailed one of Judalis of 1593. In it the R. Escondido occupies somewhat the place of the three mouthed river of the admiral's map, but the most interesting part is the region about the B. de Spirito Sancto. Two rivers empty into the Gulf not far apart, the western having a bay. The two systems are interlaced, both starting from mountains, between which and the rivers is the name Tali while Chiaha is on an island. On the west river is Quigata and higher up Coste; on the east is Ulibahali, and on later maps of this type, connecting the two, is the name Tagil, as a province. DeSoto found a Quigaute near Quiz Quiz, but west of the Mississippi, and the Ulibahalis on what is the Alabama River. So that this map, which established a new type apparently founded on DeSoto's explorations and often repeated (as by Quadus, 1600²³) is quite a puzzle. It may be a rude representation of the Tombigbee and Alabama, called S. Spirito and Canaveral respectively, although the latter name is entirely distinct on early maps. The presence of "Quigaute" is an error, for Tali and Coste (Cosa) are correct, and the Quigaute of DeSoto was far west of them. Much similar is the map of F. de Wit, which, so far as it differs, as in making the twin rivers rise in Capaschi and Calicuas, confuses rather than helps. These are really only the provinces through which on the Mercator map of

²¹ *Narrative and Critical History*, vol. viii, p. 404.

²² *Narrative and Critical History*, vol. ii, p. 281; *Cartier to Frontenac*, p. 67.

²³ *Cartier to Frontenac*, p. 68. See also pp. 110, 180.

1569 the rivers Gigantes and Piscadores run, streams shown by Wytfliet, too. Somewhat like Wytfliet may be mentioned the maps of H. Hondio (1630), Eckebrecht, and Nicolaus Visscher.

Map-making thus went on apace but so far as we know definite exploration by the Spaniards ceased after Tristan. The net result was that Spanish maps showed certain fixed names, but identification with present rivers and harbors is not always clear. It is a fascinating subject, for the Gulf has not received full study. For our purpose it may be enough to say that the Magdalena seems to be the Rio Grande, the Piscadores to be the Mississippi, and the Spiritu Santo bay to be the Mobile, while Mobile's twin, the Tensasaw, had the romantic name of Guadalquivir. Mobile Point and the bleak coast adjoining, almost treeless, was the Motas de Salvador, from its sand hills. Perdido river may be the Rio de Medaou (sand bank) and Pensacola waters those of Cannavera shown on some copies of Mercator and P. de Maria on the *Terrarum Orbis* of Henr. Hondio. The modern Chattahoochee was also a R. Santo Spiritu from DeSoto's time, causing some confusion, for several geographers thought it necessary to mingle its sources with those of the western river, and others even placed Tascalusa upon it.

Now came the age of buccaneers, and they needed pilots and charts even more than did the Spanish ships whom they had to capture or run away from. They were English or French and the maps were largely French, English or Dutch. Joliet the explorer of the upper Mississippi, has one in 1673 of the coast he never saw,²⁴ showing that river emptying into the Gulf, but has no bay of any size anywhere. His *carte generale* of North America, however, makes it empty into a large bay, which has also a separate arm to the northeast. Raudin not much later makes the Mississippi (Baude) empty similarly, and distinctly names the bay as B. du S. Esprit.²⁵

LaSalle came in 1682 from Canada down to the Gulf itself and formed some conception of the coast. He concluded that the Mississippi was the Escondido of Spanish maps, and that the Baye du

²⁴ *Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 208; *Cartier to Frontenac*, p. 245, 246. Marquette's map of the R. Mitchisipi is on p. 248.

²⁵ *Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 235.

St. Esprit was considerably to the northeast.²⁶ Coming back by sea in 1685 to locate a colony, his plan, according to Joutel's *Journal Historique*, was to find that bay and then explore east and west from it to the Mississippi. The two, therefore, according to the information of the most eminent discoverer of that day, were different places. The bay would be known according to their charts by having an island between its two points,²⁷—which may refer to Sand Island or Pelican Island at the mouth of Mobile Bay. Raudin was LaSalle's engineer and his map calls the Mississippi the Buade for Frontenac, but makes it empty, as we have seen, into the Baye du St. Esprit. Franquelin's map²⁸ is sometimes said to embrace LaSalle's discoveries, but the copy in *Mississippi Basin* (p. 77) is later; for it shows also Fort Louis on the Mobile, founded by Iberville. A remarkable thing about this map is that it shows F. Mississippi with three mouths, what appears to be something meant for Lake Pontchartrain, and a long branch of the Mississippi cutting across east to the Baie du St. Esprit. But if this is thus surely not the Mississippi or Mississippi Sound, it is as surely not correct for Mobile Bay, for next east is R. Pascouella (Pascagoula) and then the two forked La Mobile Rivière itself with Fort Louis on the west bank, emptying into the Gulf, with no bay. Geographically Franquelin's B. du St. Esprit would therefore be Biloxi; but this must be a mistake, and is probably, as Parkman understands it, really meant for Mobile. Franquelin also takes away the "Qlata" (culata) and gives it to a more eastern river. The map of Minet in 1685 is of great value. It is given in Thomassy, and shows the coast "as M. de la salle marked it on his chart (carte)." East of the mouth of what is clearly the Mississippi are in succession R. de Montanas, G. de Sorto, C. de Crux, B. du St. Esprit, &c. To the west are R. de la Magdeleine, C. Blanco, and R. Escondido,—which LaSalle previously, it will be recalled, declared was the Mississippi itself.²⁹ The bay is large and far to the east of Fl. Colbert.

In view of the maledictions of Iberville somewhat later it would be painful to rely much on the statements of Hennepin, the Recol-

²⁶ Letters of La Salle in 2 Margry's *Decouvertes*, vol. ii, pp. 198, 559; Père Zénobe, &c., in Thomassy, *Geologie*, &c., pp. 14-18.

²⁷ French's *Historical Collections of Louisiana*, vol. i, pp. 95-6.

²⁸ *Cartier to Frontenac*, p. 294.

²⁹ It is given, but without names, in *Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 237, and *Cartier to Frontenac*, p. 316.

lect father who seldom recollects anything correctly. He published three or more maps, each a little different. That of 1683 shows by a dotted line that the R. Colbert ought to empty into a double headed open bay.³⁰ One of 1697 shows the Meschasipi with two mouths, and to the east the Baye de Spirito Sancto, bending from the northeast and receiving four rivers that head south of the Hohio.³¹ Another of the same year, published at Utreght, gives the easternmost and largest of five such rivers as the Chicagua. An island is in the mouth of the bay, as in the English map he published in 1699,³² dedicated to William III. of England. On this, as on the others, the Bay of Spiritu Santo is about where Mobile should be, with Chicagua river emptying into it from the northeast, and Port Grande, which may be Pensacola, is further east. But as far east again on the maps of 1697 as well as on this of 1699 is an unnamed river, without a bay, beyond which near the sea is Tascalusa, and high upon the other side, near the mountains, is Coça. As Nero and Arnold have had defenders, it may be suggested that Hennepin in this was only copying the maps above noted which had a second R. Spiritu Sancto over there. Similar as to Bay and River of the Holy Ghost is Well's map, 1698-9, but "dressed" down to include N. Orleans founded twenty years later.³³

LaSalle's real successor was the more fortunate and possibly more accurate Iberville, whose pilot was the noted filibuster, Laurent de Craff. He became dissatisfied with many of LaSalle's identifications. He found only thirteen feet of water on Mobile bar, although the bay itself, with a "grosse rivière d'eau trouble," was excellent (fort belle) for habitation. He says that as far as size goes the Mobile might well be the Mississippi. Iberville's views as to the Bay of St. Esprit are quite interesting. In the plan he submitted June 18, 1698, before going to the Gulf of Mexico he lays much stress upon it, following LaSalle, with whom he had conversed. This bay was to be the rendezvous for his vessels and he purposed entering and examining to see if the Mississippi did not empty into it, and says he might fortify it. He seemed inclined to think that the Mississippi was further west,

³⁰ *Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 249.

³¹ *Ibid*, pp. 251, 252; *Cartier to Frontenac*, p. 358.

³² In Scaife's *America*, etc.

³³ *Cartier to Frontenac*, p. 362.

however. When he actually undertook his expedition in the fall the St. Esprit seems, at least under that name, to have dropped out of his mind almost entirely, probably from information, given by Graff and others, that the Mississippi, in which alone he was interested, did not empty into a bay. But it is possibly significant that he did enter Mobile Bay, explore it thoroughly and discover its river, and that when afterwards actually on the Mississippi, he was for a while uncertain whether that or the Mobile was the river he was seeking. Not only so, but after a temporary settlement at Biloxi he placed his colony finally on the Mobile. So that he did at Mobile what he said in advance he was going to do at the Bay of St. Esprit. But when he comes to locate the Bay St. Esprit, which he does only incidentally, he puts it at another place than Mobile Bay. The text in Margry is not clear, but Mr. French has it that in his report of July 3, 1699, as to his first voyage, he says that 13 or 14 leagues west of Mobile he found a land-sheltered anchorage, where he left his ships in order to go with the small vessels to the neighborhood of Lago de Lodo (Muddy Lake), which is the name the Spaniards give to the St. Esprit.³⁴ He explored the lower Mississippi and returned by the Amite through Maurepas and Pontchartrain, which, he says, "empty into the back part (*fond*) of the bay of Lago de Lodo, eight leagues west of where the ships were anchored," that is, of Ship Island. A lake connected with it is parallel with the Mississippi and in places less than a mile from it.³⁵ After that he hardly mentions St. Esprit one way or the other, calling the Mississippi by the Indian name "Malbanchia," just as he uses the Indian names Pensacola and Mobile,—or Mavila, as Chasteaumorant, his escort, calls it. He had two Spanish maps or charts and identifies the Mississippi with the Spanish R. de la Palissado,³⁶ but in general discards Spanish and seems to try to find out the native names and use them. Mobile, he notes, however, had been so called by the Spaniards.³⁷ Iberville, therefore, at one time thought that

³⁴ French's *Historical Collections of Louisiana*, 2nd series, p. 21. So apparently in letter of June 29, 1699, Margry, vol. iv, p. 118. See also *Ibid.*, p. 181.

³⁵ Margry, vol. iv, pp. 111, 123, 159. The map in Harper's *Magazine*, October, 1894, shows Indian tribes, &c., but does not mention the Spiritu Santo.

³⁶ Margry, vol. iv, p. 99.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

the Muddy Lake or Baye du St. Esprit was what is now called Lake Borgne, into which the Rigolets and Pearl River empty from the northeast.

FIFTH TYPE.

This may be said to create a fifth type. To this identification Coxe in his *Carolana*, both in description and map, practically assents, for he says the Bay of Nassau, which is the west end of what we now call Mississippi Sound, is the Spanish Bay of Spiritu Santo. Joutel's map is susceptible of either the Mobile or the Borgne interpretation, as the coast is too contracted to be easily made out.³⁸ Seutler, after 1705, and De L'Isle later, show the Mississippi and Mobile rivers, with B. or R. Saint Esprit where Lake Borgne or Bay St. Louis should be.

There are a large number of other maps, especially French, German and Dutch, bearing on the matter, to be found in Winsor, Fiske and other authors, and in the valuable collection made by Mr. Beer for the Howard Library at New Orleans. I have examined all available, dozens in number. It would be impracticable to discuss them at length. They follow the types already given, which may be classified as four or perhaps five in number: (1) A round harbor, landlocked, on the north coast of the Gulf, called indifferently River or Bay. This is the earliest Spanish type, varied later by giving a split or double head, and again by showing a number of other streams emptying into it, while an offset to the east becomes a marked feature. (2) A flattened harbor with two main rivers like horns, and one or more narrow entrances, the bay being, like the first, within the shore line. This is also Spanish, as is (3) the curious intermingling of what appears to be the Mobile (or Alabama) and another river on the maps of the Wytfliet type, where the western empties into a bay, and the eastern has no bay. (4) The early French type has the Mississippi under different names, (but probably never that of St. Esprit,) emptying into the B. du St. Esprit, either by its main stream, as with Joliet, or by a branch, as with LaSalle. (5) On a few later maps the Bay is located between the Mississippi and Mobile rivers. Then this name for the bay disappears entirely, as it earlier had from the river.

³⁸ *Cartier to Frontenac*, p. 318.

One little map in the Howard Library settles the contest in a very amicable way, making, like many a jury, a kind of split or average verdict. This is "Carte Particulière du Golphe de Mexique," of no date. It represents the Mississippi River, with others, too, *all* emptying into the "Bay du Saint Esprit,"—which is certainly meant for Mobile Bay, for the only city near it is the "Fort de Pensacolle," whose location has never been doubted. But this is not exactly a jury question.

Such then are the maps and the reports of explorers. What is now the proper answer to the question, where was the Bay of Spiritu Santo?

THE RESULT.

Of the inlets we named as possible candidates it seems clear that none will do with the possible exceptions of Lake Borgne, Mobile and Pensacola Bays. Lake Borgne seems to have the high authority of Iberville, but this is weakened by the fact that he was not seeking to identify the Bay. It is of course possible that the Spanish pilots had once so called it, but it will be observed that even they then called it by the different name of Lago de Lodo and not B. de Spiritu Santo. It is clear from Iberville's own accounts of his exploration that the matter was of no importance to him, and the French proceeded to provide another name yet. This lake is probably too shallow to have been singled out as the bay in question, the most prominent harbor on the north of the Gulf. When it came to actions, Iberville himself gives his bearings from Mobile Point as the most important place on the coast. This is just what it seems probable the early Spanish explorers did, and it was on that account that this bay was at that time the most prominent mark on the northern Gulf. On the other hand, it is true the entrance to Pensacola Bay was in Iberville's time the deeper, and that harbor more coveted, but that was probably due to a shifting of the channel.³⁹ This would in fact account for the bay's becoming less important and the name's dropping out of notice or becoming confounded with others by Iberville's time. If Pensacola had ever been the famous Baia de Spiritu Santo of the early Spaniards, so marked on all their maps, it would have so remained, for Pensacola was always Spanish and always accessible. It

³⁹ See on this fact *Colonial Mobile*, p. 19.

has never been claimed for Pensacola. It would seem that the Spiritu Santo Bay, then, was that of Mobile.

SPIRITU SANTO RIVER.

But where was the Spiritu Santo River?

A few maps show the bay of Spiritu Santo distinct from what on account of the names near by would seem to be Mobile River. This may indicate that the bay and river may not necessarily be at the same place. We cannot expect the early explorers to be accurate. They generally explored from the sea and perhaps located the bay more accurately than they did the river. But on the other hand the testimony of the maps is decidedly that the two go together. On all of them the characteristic bay is shown, sometimes without a river, but in a majority of cases when a name is given it is either that of the river alone or of the bay and river together.

Iberville's words show that to his mind the St. Esprit river which he knew was not the Mississippi. August 30, 1699, he writes to the Minister of Marine from Rochelle after returning from his first voyage that he had received the map sent him of the Rivière du St. Esprit, upon which English and French refugees were said to have settled, and he proceeds to discuss the matter. This river empties, according to Saily, who had descended it and whose map is in question, 80-100 leagues east of the Bay of St. Esprit, and consequently, says Iberville, into Apalache River; but his own conviction as to the River St. Esprit is that it "cannot be other than that of Mobile or Apalachicola," and the mouth is more like the latter.⁴⁰ They were talking at London of establishing a colony on this river, "which they say is the Mississippi," but Iberville sees "that they say this is only to conceal their plan of occupying the river which they name the St. Esprit." The Governor of St. Domingo, Ducasse, writing October 29, mentions the same plan of the English, but speaks of the bay of Spiritu Santo on the coast of New Spain.⁴¹ Iberville thus seems to assent to the dissociation of the river and bay. But we recall

⁴⁰ Margry, vol. iv. pp. 341-3. A map of De l'Isle 1722, Amst., makes a similar identification, as does Herman Moll, 1715. DeSoto's chroniclers, it will be remembered, had a second R. del Spiritu Santo about this location also.

⁴¹ Margry, vol. iv. p. 357.

that the Spanish maps know two such rivers. The western was at the same place with the bay and that one was therefore the Mobile. Iberville was speaking only of the eastern one. The bay was first discovered and first received the name, and the western river, less important then, probably received it because it flowed into the bay. If the Mississippi was ever called by that name, it was only because by mistake it was supposed to be the river which flowed into the bay of Spiritu Santo.

As to the bay, there can be little doubt. The early maps, from 1520 down through Spanish times, are convincing. The pear-shaped bay within the coast line, the long eastern offset at the mouth, which we called Mobile Point, are plain. No other harbor corresponds, least of all the Mississippi, with its projecting passes.

CARTOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

A number of other maps have been examined, but not discussed in the foregoing paper. The most important are here briefly summarized.

When source or location is not otherwise indicated in this paper, or in the notes, the map is to be found in the valuable collection of the Howard Memorial Library, at New Orleans, La.

Verrazano, 1529, shows apparently three bays or inlets on north coast, but no rivers.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, pp. 18, 26.

Ayllon's *Explorations*, 1530, shows long Rio de Flores in about Mobile position.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. ii, p. 285.

One of 1530 shows America as part of Asia, with bay and river, unnamed.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. ii, p. 432.

Orontius Fine, 1531, shows three pronged river and bay, middle R. de S. Spirit? and P. Arotuco (Arrecifes?).—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iii, p. 11.

Globe of Orontius Finaeus, 1531, shows two-headed bay just west of Florida peninsula with Rio de Santo Espiritu emptying into west head of it. There is west (about the Mississippi's place), a small stream, then emptying on west coast two rivers close together, north being Panico from Tangut, but emptying in Cathay.—*Fiske's Discovery of America*, p. 123.

Early French map, 1533, gives two rivers emptying into bay, west St. Esprit. Shows also a river leading through heart of La Mexique.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. ii, p. 224.

So another of 1536.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 225.

Munster, 1540, shows two rivers, without large bays, the east having two branches.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 41.

Vopellio, 1556, a two mouthed river and one east, from mountains.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. ii, p. 436.

Zaltieri, 1566, has two rivers and two bays.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 93.

Des Liens, 1566, shows only one river and bay, the bay large, with east offset.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 79.

Jno. Dee, 1580, has about centre of north coast usual shaped bay with name in Gulf "Rio de S. Spirito Santo." Only other name is on west coast, "Rio de Palmas."—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 98.

Lok 1582, two branched river into Bay. No name.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iii, p. 40; also *Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 44.

De Bry, 1596, has bay and forked river without name, but fork is high and near what is the St. Lawrence, (no great lakes). East is a shorter stream, but no real bay.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 99.

Nancy Globe has miscellaneous unnamed rivers.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. ii, p. 433.

Bodleian, 16th century, shows two rivers, (west being R. del Spirit. Santo,) emptying into a bay.

Hennepin (Utreght) shows R. de Magdelaine as our Rio Grande.

F. de Wit, like Wytfliet, has mixed the sources of twin rivers in mts. marked Capaschi and Calicuas. On coast from peninsula west are P. Phico, Apalacho, Tascalisa, C. de Hondo, then the twin river systems, C. de Cruz, C. de Sierra, R. de Montanas, R. de Lasso (in Gulf), R. de Oro, R. Bravo, Costa Deserta, and then after coast turns south the two armed R. Escondido. In interior W. of W. double river is Cossa, like Tagil in type indicating a province.

Am. sive India Nova, par Michaelem Mercatorem Duysburgensem, (no date), colored, in corner has (from East) El Cannavera, then Rio de Madauo, matas de Salvador, Rio del espirito Santo emptying into Baia de Culata, on wh. is Guadalquibir, C. de Zierto, Rio de gigantes, Costa de Pescadores Rio de Pescadores Malabrigo, C. Brava, Rio Palmar, Plaias, Arboledas, Rio de Palmas, &c.

Antillen Inseln G. P. Busch sc. Berolini, no date. Has only F des Bilochy and F low on Mississipp ou la Grande rivers, Mobile on unnamed river with large bay. "S. Spiritus" seems to name an inlet E. of mouth of Miss.

Guil De l'Isle, 1722, Amst., Mexique and La Floride. Marks an eastern river, as "Apalachicola ou Hunanachi et R du St. Esprit."

Quadus, 1600, much like DeWit. No names.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 101.

Small Orbis Terrarum of Nicolaus Ioa Visschero has in one place a date, 1616, but lacks river and bay names. Has mixed river system and names like DeWit.

Small Terrarum Orbis of Henr. Hondio, 1630, is much the same as DeWit except that it omits bay name, calls east and west rivers R. Flores and R. de Cruz respectively, and runs the upper rivers further east through a lake to Va. The next place east is a bay, P. de Maria, west after Cruz are Brava Costa, R. Secondido, without a stream, and large one southwest without name. It omits the great lakes but has Huttons (Hudson's) Bay.

Eckebrecht, 1630, less in detail than last, but much like it in arrangement, names, &c.

This and the preceding have a large river, just south of curve of Gulf coast, called Escondido on this last.

Nicolaus Visscher's *Insulae Americanae*, &c., with Bahia and three interlaced rivers, much as DeWit with long two branched R. de Canaveral from Coza also emptying into the Bahia, and a smaller Canaveral next east with islands at its mouth into the gulf, while Tascalasa and Achusi are towns on it. So Jno. Ogilby in his book on *America*, 1671. The name of the map is held by Cupids, and the scale faced by tritons and seductive nymphs.

Jesuit map, 1672-3, has Mitchisipi mouth as the first Joliet map.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 221.

Raudin (after 1637) has R. Buade—clearly Mississippi—with two others unnamed emptying into "E. du. S. Esprit" of usual shape.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 235.

Joliet's map, 1673-4, shows Mississippi emptying with a slight increase of width into Le Sein de Mexique. He has "Europeans" on a small stream to east.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iii, p. 208. Another Joliet map has the Riv. de Mississipi emptying into a bay with another head, &c.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 218.

Roggeveen, 1675, shows Mar Pequeno, &c., as on early Spanish maps, with name Rio del Spiritu Santo, but no name for bay.—*Mississippi Basin*, p. 39.

N. Sanson (1679?) Amsterdam, North and South America. Shows four large rivers from mountains south of great lakes emptying into a bay on north Gulf. No names.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. i, p. 18.

Map of Louisiane (prefixed to vol. iii of Margry), showing La Salle's discoveries, 1679-82, gives (1) "R. de *So Spiritu*" emptying into B. du S. Esprit, as on east does R. de Canasseral, (2) Kosa on R. "So Su" and much higher up is Maouila, (3) that river and Fl Louis ou Ch...goa (same as the Ohio), &c., run parallel and interlace, (4) at east it seems to connect with another Spiritu Santo running into Gulf at Florida's corner.

Franquelin (1681?) has branch of Mississippi emptying into Baie du S. Esprit, whose west cape is Cape Desert. Next east is R. Pascouella and then forked La Mobile Riviere emptying with no bay worthy of the name.—*Mississippi Basin*, p. 77.

Franquelin, 1684, has Mississippi mouth without widening and far to east a wide bay with narrow mouth; five small rivers empty into it.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 228.

L'Amérique Septentrionale... par P. Coronelli, Paris, 1689, shows R. Mississippi ou Colbert, &c., with two months emptying far to southwest, near R. Bravo and about 100 lieues east is B. de lo Espritu Santo with mouths of 5 rivers, C. Hondo its east point and C. S. Crux rather far to west of bay. Interior at this point not shown. There is a R. del Spit. Santo where Florida turns south.

G. Broedelet (Utrecht), no date, has Fleuve Meschasipi complete to Gulf and 60 lieues east "Baye de Spiritu Santo." East on a river is Tascaluca, R. de Magdelaine is our R. Grande.

Another, slightly changed, has east river a little longer and named "Chicagua R." Both have "Tascaluca" much further east near a river rising in "Mons Apalache," and the second has "Coça," both as towns, high up on west of that stream, 1700.

Campanius, 1702, has the bay and rivers without names, and no Mississippi.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. iv, p. 394.

Novus Orbis of Matth. Seutler has among its dates of discovery, 1705, has Mississippi in full, with two mouths, and "F" near, then east a bay and river with B. S. Spiritus, then east "F. Bilocchy," and then east Cosa, Tascaluca, Caquetta and Mobila as towns on a two branched river.

L'Amérique Septentrionale par G. del L'Isle chez Pierre Schenk, (Amst.) the same as last with names in French, as B. du St. Esprit. (at Lake Borgne's location,) Chagueta, Maouila ou Mobila, &c. 1708.

Herman Moll, 1715, has none of the old names, but shows R. del Spiritu Sancto as named also Chatahuch R. Into P. & H. of I. Dauphine, on which is Fort Mobill, empties from north west Mobile R., into which from west flows Chacta R.; from northeast empties R. Conchaques, into which flow Pedegoe R. and Cabo Creek and Cusa R.; high upon the last being the Conchaques. Where Caba and Cusa join, at the Talapoosie town 100 men, a road crosses from Charles Town to Yasu on R. St. Louis, striking the other streams higher up.

America Septentrionalis studio... de L'Isle... sumptibus C. Weigelii Heredum Norimberga, with Indian vignettes, has everything complete, even Cal. a peninsula, and Mississipi R., and near the mouth "R. du St. Esprit" almost opposite the mouth of Mississippi. It has the Maouila or Mobila for town in fork of second river east, northwest of which is town Chagueta, and northeast Tascaluca. Pensacola shown on coast.

Coxe's map, 1722, shows coast with R. Pascagoula, R. Coza. (Mobile and F. Louis on it,) Pensacola, &c. R. Spiritu Santo is Apalache.—*Mississippi Basin*, pp. 44-45.

La Potherie, 1772, shows Mississippi emptying straight, and to east is large Baye de Spiritu Sancto, with small streams. R. de Spiritu Santo empties from north near northwest corner of peninsula of Florida.—*Mississippi Basin*, p. 79.

Bolton's improvement on D'Anville, 1752, for Postleway's Dic. of Trade and Com. has no S. S., but shows "C. Lodo or Mud C." at mouth of Mississippi.

Dumont, 1753, has Eiloxi Bay like old Spiritu Santo and Mobile Bay hardly a widening of the R. de la Mobbille. (Tombigbee.)—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. v, p. 82.

DuPratz, 1758, shows L. S. Louis with island at mouth much like Spiritu Santo with Manchac emptying into it, &c.—*Narrative and Critical History*, vol. v, p. 66.

Large map, 1777, "according to Gov. Pownall's memorandum" has "Cape Lodo or Mud Cape" at mouth of the Mississippi. (Ft. Croften on east side Mobile Bay.)

West Indien By Theunis Jacobsz (Amsterdam,) no date, is a chart of coast. Mississippi does not appear, but Mar. pequeno, with R. dt Spto Santo at northwest corner does. Many names east and west, none in interior.

Johannem Iansonium much the same, Quiata (perhaps by accident) a little east. by a separate small bay.

America Septentrionalis Novissima, (Amstelodami,) by P. Schenk, ex Amsteloed, has five large rivers emptying into the large B. de Spir. Santo, the only one on north coast. The westernmost (except another smaller) is R. de Spiritu Santo. The easternmost comes from Coza, &c. It somewhat resembles DeWit in the mingling of the three central streams. Chisca and Tascaluca are east of the system, the last near the coast. Quiguta is in the middle of the system, Ulibahali considerably northeast above it on one branch, Tali and Coste on one to the northwest. There are no other recognizable DeSoto names.

"Teatre de la Guerre en Amerique Coveus and Mortier Amst." has Missisipi R., Ochio R., &c., and Bay del Spirito Sancto with three small unnamed streams into it, and the words Ostras, Marpequee, and Qualata. On west "Cap de Far ou Cruz" and above it on west side of bay an island. To east are R. del Canaveral, Plaia on coast, R. Flores, Cap Escondido, Nieves R.

Totius Americae Nova Exhibitio (small) Port Grande, Sta. Maria del Buz, and then peninsula. West is only small R. Snelo, Isle Marascagenes Embouchures du Misisipi Riv., 1683. Bay de St. Louis at mouth of Riv. aux Vaches and north on Brave Riv. bounding La. on south. Fine engraving in corner of Indians and French trading, and naval battle. In Gulf lieues—Brasses d'eau; has no date but has many names, shows Spanish possessions (including Florida from Mississippi to Atlantic) in yellow, Virginia, N. Anglia, Canada, California as islands, &c. Mischasipi Fl. is there in full length, with Hohio branch, and to the east B. de Spiritu Sancto with Tascalusa on an east branch and Achusi south of that on the coast, both as towns. Button's Bay, Ft. Crevecoeur, great lakes, &c., shown.

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